

## ACT 1

The ground floor flat, stage R, of STEVE KINGSELLAR, and the Community Centre, stage L, are based in the town of "Potty Hemlock".

From the centre line of the stage there will be a ramp; this ramp will lead into the Community Centre, half on stage R, and half on stage L, of the centre line; that runs in the direction of the audience downstage, thus making the Community Centre bigger than Steve's flat and the ramp keeps the two rooms completely separate. Stage R of the ramp will have a handrail. There is enough room left, for a walkway from stage R, to stage L, behind the scenery.

Steve's flat - stage R. The back wall of the flat is set forward downstage further than the Community Centre back wall. Steps lead down to the front door. The front door, ULC of the flat has obscure glass in the top half, a letterbox and is in the rear wall, it is hung stage R and opens in to the flat. Also in the rear wall, R of the front door is a window with the curtains drawn. Through the window you can clearly see the characters, as they walk down the steps past the window to the front door. There is a light switch between the window and door. There is an archway leading to the rest of the flat on the R wall, upstage. And another door that leads to a broom cupboard, downstage from the arch. The lounge would consist of a small sofa, C, positioned at a slight angle looking at the C of the stage, with a small table by it; this will allow various actions to go on behind it and a telephone on a small table under the window. The decoration would be quite simple, a shade of red with a mirror and a few coat hooks. The lighting needs to create a warm feel.

The Community Centre - stage L. The main entrance has double doors in the rear wall, URC, and opens into the Community Centre on to the ramp (wheelchair access), so these doors are higher than the front door in the flat; there is a light switch by them. There is also an open doorway in the L wall, downstage, which leads to the "refectory". There are six chairs stacked-up for the therapists and patients, and also a small table against the rear wall. The colour of the walls will be white and again a few coat hooks. There will be a couple posters on the rear wall about therapy, including three big enough for the audience to read, with "**Antidote Awakening Recovery Assistance**", as a title with "Steve Kingsellar" under it"; another poster with "**Marriage Guidance Counselling**" as a title with "Kate Stockwell" below it; one also saying "**Martial Arts for Beginners**". The lighting in this room needs to be more towards a clinical white light.

The farce will simultaneously take place in both rooms, so naturally the cast are oblivious to what is going on - on the other half of the stage.

When the curtain rises, it is early on a Friday morning on a summer's day. Steve's mobile phone is ringing in the lounge, stage R. There are various items of Steve's clothing spread around his lounge floor and also a bra, hanging from the front door handle. Also, there are empty wine bottles and a couple glasses.

The lounge stage R, and the Community Centre stage L, are in darkness.

After a few rings of the mobile phone, STEVE KINGSELLAR comes out from the archway looking very tired. He is wearing garish boxer shorts, one sock, a t-shirt, plus a ratty old dressing gown. Also, attached to one wrist are furry handcuffs, these must be tucked up the arm of the dressing gown for his first entrance on stage. STEVE is a good looking man,

*intelligent, normally very sensible and leads a quiet life, until this morning when his life unravels at a rapid rate of knots.*

**STEVE**

*(STEVE walks dazed, into the lounge and trips over behind the sofa, he then scrambles to get up) Blast it! That's really going to help my hangover! (he switches on the light switch and the room lights up, but not to full brightness yet, that will happen when he opens the curtains) Where did I leave my phone? (he crawls around trying to find where the noise of the ringing is coming from, he finds his trousers on the floor in front of the sofa and pulls the phone out the pocket, he answers the mobile on his knees sounding exhausted)*

*Hello? (pause) Yes, this is Steve. (pause) Samantha? (he frowns) Last night? (he stands up and gives a look of horror, his memory is jolted of what happened last night) Sorry? (alarmed) Well I, I, I've got to go to work. (covering the phone) Oh blimey, I'm in deep sh.. (his arm drops and the handcuffs swing from his arm, he tries to pull the handcuffs off, startled he returns to the conversation) Yes I'm still here; I'm just looking for a key. (starts pacing the lounge looking for the handcuff key and occasionally trying to pull the handcuffs off)*

*(alarmed) Pardon? (he repeats back slowly what she has said) You're, in love with me! (gob-smacked) How can you be in love with me? Last night was the first time we'd met. (pause) I can't see you today. (pause) Nor tomorrow, in fact I can't... (cheering up a bit) That's very generous of you to say that. (gets slightly embarrassed) Well... (pause) Yes I'm quite positive that the donkey reference hasn't been mentioned before. (he opens the curtains, daylight pours in and lights the room to full brightness)*

*(remembers who he's talking to) Look Sam the thing is, I was in a rather bad state when I met you last night. (pause) Well I... (pause) It's completely out of character for me to start flirting with a lady that I've just met. (pause) Drinking those cocktails finished me off. (pause) How do I feel? (he sits down looking drained) Like, (pauses to think) the contents of a horse's digestive system; has been released into my mouth. (pauses and pulls a disgusted face)*

*I don't want to give you false hope that we could start a relationship. (pause) Hang on... (pause) Please just listen to me for a second... (he keeps speaking to stop her interrupting) To be honest, I've been in love with a good friend of mine for a long time now and I can't seem to move on from her. That's why my friends dragged me out last night; to try and cheer me up. (pause) Yes, you did hear me correctly; I'm in love with a good friend of mine. (pause) No I can't. (pause) You deserve someone who can really make you happy but I'm afraid... it's not me. (pause) I've got to go I'm truly, truly, sorry, I really am. (he ends the call hastily and stands up, he starts to tidy his lounge re-arranging the sofa, puts shoes by the front door, etc)*

*I can't even recall what she looked like. (horrified) Blimey, was it that one dressed as a French maid... who was bald and had a ginger beard! (thinks) No that was the drag act... I think. (pauses to reflect) I am one of life's good people; I've never treated anybody badly. Well; after last night that's proved one thing for sure, there is no one that comes close; to Emma.*

*(he sits down crest fallen) It's also made me realise just how much I am in love with her. Why have I fallen for a happily married woman? (cross with himself) I'm such an idiot. (slaps his own forehead in annoyance)*

*(he sighs deeply)* Due to last night's continuous flow of alcohol, I've complicated my life even more. *(stands up and starts pacing again)* How did I end up talking to Sam? *(pause)* I definitely had a kebab, because I swear what the chap was taking slithers of meat from... looked like a Cocker Spaniel. I didn't eat much of it because it tasted foul and I left it on the wall by the club. *(pauses and remembers something)* That's it; we went to that night club The Ruby Lounge, that's where I met her. She's got that dodgy eye and I thought she winked at me; *(more information is dawning on him)* then the Beatles, "all you need is love" came on and...

*(the landline phone rings, startled he picks it up)* Hello? *(he pauses to let his mum speak, he slaps his cheeks to sober himself up)* Hello Mother. *(pause)* Pardon? *(pause)* You've told Dad; he's got to move out? *(pause)* I'm sure it's just a little disagreement; you'll laugh about it tomorrow. *(reacts with panic)* You want him to live with me? *(pause)* You know I'd help if I could but I've only got one bed; you live in a house with five bedrooms! *(pause)* Dad's done what? *(pause)* But he always sits around getting in your way. *(pause)* And letting off gasses, *(pause)* strong enough to sedate a baby elephant. *(pause)* At least he remembered your birthday last month. *(pulls phone away from ear)* Yes I know it's the same date as his birthday but... *(he cringes)* Hello? Mum? She's hung up on me that's all I need, being stuck in the middle of my parents arguing, again! *(puts phone down)*

**STEVE** I feel like death warmed up, I must get a move on or I'll be late for work. I've got to get over Emma, I'm cracking up!

*the doorbell rings, it is SAM*

**SAM** Stevie baby, it's Sam.

**STEVE** *(sheer terror, drops to his knees in front of the sofa)* Oh dear Lord no, it can't be her. *(puts his hands together as if praying that she'll go away)* How on earth did she remember where I live?

**SAM** *(letterbox opens and she speaks through it)* Why are you on the floor praying? Let me in you gorgeous, gorgeous stud.

**STEVE** *(through gritted teeth)* Yes, just coming. *(he opens the front door)* Hello Sam.

**SAM** *(SAM HOLESCOCK has a very bubbly personality, loves being touchy/feely with everyone, rather excitable but quite naïve, childlike at times, heavy make-up, in a summer dress, big hoop earrings, ghastly necklace, high heels that she wobbles on and a leopard print coat. Also she has a handbag and occasionally her right eye winks/twitches, which in turn makes her give a psychotic stare. She kisses STEVE passionately)* I've missed you so much; I couldn't wait to see you.

**STEVE** *(grimacing)* It was lucky you remembered where I live then!

**SAM** Actually, I couldn't remember. I knew we got a taxi last night from the centre of town and we passed, Trapaman Railway Station, but then I fell asleep and when I woke up we were here. But this morning when I went home, I had an idea, I phoned the nice taxi man who picked me up earlier and got him to bring me back. *(she kisses him again, walks in and sits down)* That's what I

was trying to tell you on the phone but I think there was a bad signal, as it cut me off. *(remembers something)* Oh yeah I meant to say, before I left last night I had a little accident - bless me. *(silly laugh)*

**STEVE** *(he shuts the front door and sits down)* Why, what did you do?

**SAM** I don't know if you remember, but when we came out of the night club just before we got the taxi back, I said that I was hungry.

**STEVE** Well, I vaguely recollect.

**SAM** All the takeaways were shut but luckily I found a kebab on the wall, so I finished it. But I think the kebab and the ten pints of cider did not mix well, I didn't want to turn the lights on when I left last night because you were asleep. I found your bathroom just in time as I was really, really sick. *(she points to his broom cupboard)*

**STEVE** *(he looks in disbelief)* But that's my broom cupboard, the toilet is down the hall on the left.

**SAM** Oops, I am a silly billy. *(she starts to get up)* I'd better clean it up.

**STEVE** No, don't worry I'll do it later.

*the doorbell rings, it is KATE*

**STEVE** I'll just see who that is. *(STEVE opens the front door)*

**KATE** *(KATE STOCKWELL walks in, well educated, attractive, she has a very calming personality and she is smartly dressed in a suit)* Hello Steve, I just wondered if you wanted a lift to work?

**STEVE** Thanks Kate, but I'm a bit tied up at the moment. *(realising the handcuffs are still dangling, he quickly puts his arm behind his back)* I've got an itch on my back. *(nervously laughs)* I'll make my way to the Community Centre a bit later... Oh this is Samantha.

**KATE** Sorry, I didn't realise you had company. How do you do? *(goes in front of the sofa and shakes her hand)*

**SAM** Hi ya. *(SAM stands and shakes KATE'S hand)*

**STEVE** *(STEVE shuts the front door and moves to the front of the sofa)* This is Kate, a good friend of mine and also my work colleague. That reminds me, can you remember to hand out the invites for the party to any patients that you see today?

**KATE** Don't worry I hadn't forgotten, my husband might come as well.

**SAM** Is Kate, your *best* friend?

**STEVE** Well at our age I don't think we have best friends do we, but I suppose... *(STEVE realises what SAM means)* Sorry, umm no yes umm yes, Kate *is* my *best* friend who I, who I, think is, is... very intelligent and also... extremely beautiful and I, I... think the world of her.

**KATE** That's kind of you to say that, thank you. It was nice to meet you Samantha, and I'll see you later Steve. (*KATE goes to the front door*)

**STEVE** Yes I will see you soon... sweetie pie. (*STEVE tries to jump over the sofa and ends up straddling it, he grabs KATE and kisses her passionately and then pushes her out the front door, KATE looks stunned and slaps him, STEVE slams the front door*) There, you see, I love Kate!

**SAM** You might love Kate, but she *can't* love you! Kate mentioned her husband, so there is no way you can be with her.

**STEVE** (*trying to convince her*) It's only a matter of time before we end up together.

**SAM** (*she sits down again*) I don't care, I still want to be with you and unless Kate leaves her husband, I'm going to keep you all to myself. So what shall we do today?

**STEVE** I'm awfully sorry Sam, but I've got to get to work.

**SAM** I promise not to stay long Mr Gorgeous, I don't know anything about you, tell me everything. What's your favourite colour? (*she doesn't give him a chance to answer*) Mine is yellow because it's beautiful and it's also the colour of my favourite flower, a daffodil and the colour of the sunshine, and Little Miss sunshine makes me smile. What do you like doing to relax?

**STEVE** (*with sarcasm*) Skydiving; at night..... without a parachute! (*he reluctantly sits down*)

**SAM** (*she giggles*) Really? What I love to relax to is water; I just adore it when I turn on my kitchen taps, I get goose pimples, don't you?

**STEVE** (*sarcastically*) Yes; breath-taking.

**SAM** What's your favourite film?

**STEVE** (*sternly*) "Jaws".

**SAM** Brrrrr. (*she shivers*) I don't like that that one, it scares me.

**STEVE** I know what you mean; you either love it or hate it, it's a bit like "Marmite".

**SAM** Marmite? I've not heard of that one, is it Swedish? I don't like films with subtitles. What are your parents' names?

**STEVE** (*getting annoyed*) Bill and Ben!

**SAM** What's your favourite sport?

**STEVE** (*rolls his eyes*) Dyke Jumping!

**SAM** You're so funny, stop being silly. (*childish laugh and gives him a push*)

**STEVE** I'm not being silly, a dyke is a man-made channel which surrounds a field; and dyke jumping is when you use a long pole and with a run up you hoist yourself across the dyke.

**SAM** I used to love playing cricket with my brothers; until the accident.

**STEVE** What accident?

**SAM** Didn't I tell you last night? When I was thirteen we were playing cricket in the garden, my brother was batting and he hit the ball straight into my right eye. I'm really lucky that I didn't go blind; *(pauses to think)* or deaf. Apparently, the eye hospital had never had a case like me before - bless me.

**STEVE** *(agog)* But, you look fine.

**SAM** The only problem I've had with my eye since the accident is that it dries out a lot, and if it gets too dry it freezes in whichever direction it's looking at the time. So I've got prescription eye-drops which I put in three times a day, I keep the eye-drops in my handbag just in case I need them quickly. *(she then bursts out laughing)* Do you remember in your bedroom last night I quickly ran out?

*in the Community Centre, KATE comes in the main entrance doors and turns on the light switch, the room lights up to full brightness, she takes her coat off etc, and starts preparing for her next patients*

**STEVE** To be truthful, I can't recall a great deal about last night.

**SAM** Well... when we were playing doctors and nurses; my eye froze, which made you jump and you lost your balance, and then you dropped Dolly! So I ran to your lounge mirror to put the eye-drops in, to get my eye moving again. *(STEVE and SAM carry on talking about the eye silently)*

**KATE** *(thinking out loud to herself)* Steve looked absolutely dreadful, he is always so well-groomed. Why on earth did he kiss me and shower me with compliments? He's never done that before, he was behaving like he was drunk, and how long's he been dating that rather exceptional... lady? I'm somewhat stunned at his choice of female company. *(pauses to consider)* I presume she *is* a female!  
Oh well.... let's see who I'm meeting today. *(looks at her notes)* Not those two, they were the last couple from yesterday, Mr & Mrs Noon's. *(pulls a face)* More like *loons* in my opinion, mad as hatters the pair of them. *(she pauses while reminiscing)* Now what did he say, when I asked if he'd ever been happy at any point in their marriage? *(remembers and adopts a male tone)* I was ecstatic in 1989, when the wife got laryngitis and lost her voice. *(carries on silently and sets out three chairs, etc)*

**STEVE** *(trying to get his head around what she has said)* I'm truly delighted for you, that you have such a loving and supportive family, who were there for you when you had the accident.

**SAM** I am soooo lucky, *(sings)* lucky, lucky, lucky.

**STEVE** I do envy you in a way, all my parents ever do is argue I'd give my *right* eye to have a normal family. *(realising what he has said, he quickly adds)* Umm, so do you live with your parents?

**SAM** *(her eye starts twitching)* Yeah, but I'm just waiting for Mr Right, who I think I've just found and I've got lots of plans. *(moving closer to STEVE)*

**STEVE** *(high voice)* Do you? *(carry on silently)*

**KATE** *(sits down and starts looking through papers/notes)* I'm only seeing Mr and Mrs Taylor today. Right, let's have a look. "Mrs Taylor has been cheating on her husband". Are there any couples, who haven't? I do wonder at times why I decided to be, a marriage guidance counsellor. *(carries on silently reading papers)*

**SAM** I'd like to get married *again* as soon as I can and then have three children; I've already got their names sorted.

**STEVE** *(looking slightly terrified)* You have?

**SAM** I've taken the names from my heroes. Firstly Kermit, then Fozzie and for the third one, little baby Gonzo. I absolutely love living in Potty Hemlock, but my dream is to move to Australia, there is this area that looks amazing and the people are so friendly, it's called Erinsborough.

**STEVE** *(the penny drops)* I see, by any chance there isn't a cul-de-sac called Ramsey Street, is there?

**SAM** *(very excited)* Stevie! I'm so pleased you know where it is, we'll be really happy there. *(she gives him a massive hug and he falls off the sofa)*

**STEVE** *(remembers something)* Hang on go back a bit, did you say you'd like to get married... *again?* *(he gets off the floor and sits down again)*

**SAM** *(she giggles)* Oops, didn't I tell you I was married? *(they carry on silently, STEVE is getting more agitated)*

**JERRY** *(JERRY TAYLOR knocks on the Community Centre main entrance doors and walks in; he's a proud man with a quiet personality unless antagonised, he's quite downtrodden from his marriage with Mandy, he's wearing smart trousers, jacket, shirt and tie and also wears a wig; followed by his wife MANDY TAYLOR; who has a very strong personality, obviously bored with life, talks as if she's come from a high class background, when in actual fact she is quite common; always snappy with her husband but nice to everyone else, wearing a summer dress; whenever MANDY snaps at JERRY, his right arm spasm's and shoots up in the air and back down, JERRY speaks first)*  
How do you do, not too early are we?

**KATE** No, not at all come in and take a seat. *(they shake hands and sit down)* It's Mr and Mrs Taylor isn't it? My name is Kate Stockwell; before we carry on, can I offer you a drink?

**JERRY** That would be lovely, could I have a coffee please?

**MANDY** *(shouts at him)* You are *not* having a coffee!

*JERRY'S right arm spasm's and shoots up in the air and back down*

**MANDY** Otherwise we'll have to stop on the way back because you'll get caught short. I'm sick to death of waiting in the car whilst you go behind a hedge; you spend half your life behind a hedge. Jerry doesn't need a coffee thank you, and neither do I.

**JERRY** *(crestfallen)* Thank you anyway.

**KATE** Ok, may I suggest that we begin with you explaining when things started to go wrong in your marriage.

**JERRY** As far as I'm concerned, Mandy can do the explaining as she's the reason we've come here.

**KATE** That's fine, as you describe what has happened please stay calm; emotions can run high at difficult times like these.

**MANDY** Well I'll go back to the beginning. You see, my husband even though he'll deny it, seems to pick up any form of bug going around. *(glares at him)* On this particular day, he came home early from work because he couldn't stop coughing. He coughed so hard; that he passed wind. *(gives a look of distaste and disbelief)* And then he soiled himself.

**JERRY** I cannot believe you just told her that!

**MANDY** *(ignoring him)* He ran to the loo but started coughing again; which set him off vomiting. So I called for the doctor as I can't drive, and he said Jerry had broken three ribs. The stupid oaf! *(gives him a look of contempt)* The doctor signed him off work for a few weeks, the problem was he ended up on a constant cycle of painkillers and didn't know what planet he was on.

*dumbfounded by what she has just heard, KATE goes to the back table to get the questionnaires; MANDY roughly straightens JERRY'S wig, then KATE comes back and hands them both a clipboard*

**KATE** Could you fill in this questionnaire as we continue to talk, it will just enable me to make a brief assessment for our next appointment. Please can you carry on with your story?

**JERRY** Before she babbles on anymore, let me just make it clear that I was in a lot of pain from my broken ribs, I was on so many different painkillers, that I ended up with this side-effect, where my right arm spasm's occasionally. Breathing became unbearable, so I ended up confined to my armchair in the lounge where I was most comfortable. It was a very depressing time for me; not that she cared, I was worried that I'd lose my job as well. I work in the planning department of the local council and they're getting rid of staff, left right and centre.

**MANDY** As he said, his backside was glued to the chair, now he was as much use to me as a vacuum cleaner which blows instead of sucks. Hmm; story of my life. *(looks at him with scorn)*

**JERRY** Look Mandy, I'm not prepared to sit here and be insulted.

**MANDY**        *(shouts at him)* Well stand up then!

*JERRY'S arm spasm's*

**KATE**        Please, please, can we get back to the matter in hand?

**MANDY**        That's something else, he's useless at!

**JERRY**        I've had enough of this, you're just enjoying humiliating me, I'm going home and... *(JERRY stands in protest but MANDY also stands and pushes him back into his seat and then MANDY sits down again, KATE tries to calm them down silently)*

**STEVE**        No, you definitely did *not* mention that you were married.

**SAM**         When I say married we *are* separated. That's why I'm living back at my parents, I want a divorce but he won't give me one.

**STEVE**        If you don't mind me asking, why have you split up?

**SAM**         I wanted to have the three children; Kermit, Fozzie and little baby Gonzo, but he didn't. He also got really jealous. I couldn't meet friends without him thinking, that I was meeting another guy behind his back.

**STEVE**        I know the green eyed monster can destroy relationships.

**SAM**         Exactly, and his temper was dreadful. If he saw his Princess talking to a man he would go mad and beat him up. And he used to be *a cage-fighter*. *(carry on talking silently, STEVE looks terrified)*

**MANDY**        I've got a job three evenings a week in a restaurant, it's my only salvation to stop me going insane being stuck at home all day. He always dropped me off and picked me up. Course, now he couldn't because of his ribs. I got a taxi the first time. It was the owner who was driving. I explained my predicament and he kindly offered a discount if it was going to be a regular arrangement. So that's how it happened.

**KATE**        Sorry, you've lost me there. How what happened?

**JERRY**        *(upset)* I'll tell you what happened, this, this, taxi bloke wanted to make sure that Mandy would use him again. So he gave her... *a good service!* *(they go silent with their thoughts)*

**STEVE**        Blimey; c c c cage-fighter! As in; in a cage, fighting another man? I'm glad he didn't see me last night, that's all I can say. Sam, I'm not ready to get into a relationship at the moment or anytime soon, this is all a bit too much.

**SAM**         *(stroking his hair)* Don't worry baby, we can take it slowly. *(she jumps on him and glues him to the sofa, silently he struggles to get free)*